

## Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECT

REF: USIA CM-929: TUNIS 4835

SUMMARY: AFTER WIDE CONSULTATIONS, POST FINDS THAT ONLY BICENTENNIAL PARTNERSHIP PROJECT FEASIBLE UNDER GUIDELINES CONTAINED CM OF REFERENCE IS ONE DISCUSSED REFTEL, I.E., PROFESSOR OF AMERICAN STUDIES AT UNIVERSITY OF TUNIS.

1. FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR, COUNTRY TEAM AND SECRETARY GENERAL TUNISIA-AMERICA ASSOCIATION CONFIRM THAT PROJECT DESCRIBED IN REFTEL MOST DESIRABLE IN TERMS OF LONG-TERM IMPACT AND CP OBJECTIVES. SEC-GEN TUNISIA-AMERICA ASSOCIATION, WHO IS AMERICAN -EDUCATED DIRECTOR OF TUNISIA MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE, WAS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THIS PROJECT AS WELL AS OTHER SUGGESTIONS CONTAINED IN REF CM, PARTICULARLY FORMATION OF AN ALUMNI ORGANIZATION FOR TUNISIANS HOLDING AMERICAN DEGREES, BUT INFORMED PAO THAT ASSOCIATION HAS NO FUNDS AVAILABLE, HENCE CANNOT SERVE AS CO-SPONSOR. POST THEREFORE SUBMITS PROPOSAL FOR A GRANT OF APPROXIMATELY \$30,000 TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS, UNIVERSITY OF TUNIS, FOR FUNDING A PROFESSOR IN AMERICAN STUDIES FOR ONE YEAR AND ESTABLISHMENT OF A RESOURCE CENTER FOR AMERICAN

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STUDIES.

2. PAO AND CAO HAVE HAD SECOND MEETING WITH DEAN, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF TUNIS, AND BOTH POST AND DEAN STILL INTENSELY INTERESTED IN AMERICAN STUDIES PROJECT AS OUTLINED REFTEL. HOWEVER, AS UNIVERSITY YEAR HERE OPENS ONLY IN MID-OCTOBER AND RUMORS OF SHAKE-UP IN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CHAIRMANSHIP PERSIST, DEAN IS STILL UNABLE TO MAKE FINANCIAL COMMITMENT BEYOND OFFER OF TD 200 (APPROXIMATELY \$480) MINIMUM MONTHLY SALARY, WITH POSSIBILITY OF INCREASE DEPENDENT ON GRANTEE'S QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE.

3. POST ESTIMATES GRANT OF \$30,000 MINIMUM TO GET PROJECT OFF THE GROUND (I.E. APPROXIMATELY \$15,000 TO TOP OFF PROFESSOR'S SALARY: \$5,000 FOR TRAVEL AND ALLOWANCES: AND \$10,000 FOR EQUIPMENT AND SOFTWARE, INCLUDING MICROFILM READERS AND MATERIALS, VIDEOTAPES AND PLAYER, ETC.) THERE NO POSSIBILITY UNIVERSITY CAN MATCH GRANT THIS SIZE IN CASH, AND POST DOUBTS IF ANY THIRD-WORLD STATES, OTHER THAN OIL PRODUCERS, WOULD BE WILLING OR ABLE. HOWEVER, UNIVERSITY WILL PROVIDE OFFICE SPACE, AMPLE FREE TIME FOR RESEARCH, SPACE FOR RESOURCE CENTER, ETC, WHICH COULD BE GENEROUSLY EVALUATED TO MAKE UP DIFFERENCE IN MATCHING FUNDING.

4. POST FEELS THAT OPPORTUNITY RIPE TO MAKE MAJOR INROAD INTO TUNISIAN HIGHER EDUCATION, WHICH HAS BEEN DOMINATED BY FRENCH CONTENT AND METHODOLOGY. BICENTENNIAL PROVIDES VEHICLE, BUT IMPENDING RUMORED CHANGES IN ENGLISH DEPARTMENT GIVE FURTHER IMPETUS. POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT PRESENT DEAN, WHO FRENCH IN EDUCATION AND BRITISH IN ACCENT, WILL BE REPLACED BY YOUNG, ENERGETIC AMERICAN EDUCATED (PH.D. CORNELL) PROFESSOR WHO HAS WAGED TWO SUCCESSFUL BATTLES AGAINST ENTRENCHED ACADEMIC PREJUDICES, FIRST IN OBTAINING EQUAL RECOGNITION FOR HIS AMERICAN DEGREE VIS-A-VIS FRENCH CREDENTIALS, THEN IN INTRODUCING CURRICULUM REFORMS IN FIRST-YEAR ENGLISH PROGRAM FAVORING FUNCTIONAL LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION IN FAVOR OF TRANSLATION AND GRAMMAR. IF HE IN FACT BECOMES DEAN, HE WILL BE ARDENT SUPPORTER AMERICAN STUDIES PROJECT. HE ALSO HAS REPUTATION OF BEING GO-GETTER FINANCIALLY.

5. POST THEREFORE HOPES AGENCY CAN KEEP ITS PROPOSAL OPEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNTIL START OF ACADEMIC YEAR AND RESOLUTION OF INTRA-DEPARTMENTAL RIVALRY FOR CHAIRMANSHIP. BELIEVE UNIQUENESS OF OPPORTUNITY OFFERED BY BICENTENNIAL-LINKED PARTNERSHIP PROJECT, RATHER THAN USUAL FULBRIGHT GRANT, EQUALLED BY PRESENT RECEPTIVITY OF UNIVERSITY AUTHORITIES, AND THAT PATIENT PERSISTENCE SHOULD PAY OFF.

6. POST IS SUBMITTING TO CU REQUEST FOR FULBRIGHT PROFESSOR

FOR UNIVERSITY OF TUNIS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR '75-'76 IN FIELD OF  
AMERICAN LWT, THROUGH NORMAL RECRUITING CHANNELS. IF OUR  
PROPOSAL FOR BICENTENNIAL PROJECT IS APPROVED, WE WOULD HOPE  
FUNDING THIS PROFESSOR COULD BE TRANSFERRED TO BICENTENNIAL  
GRANT, THUS FREEING THAT PORTION OUR VERY LIMITED CU ALLOCATION FOR  
OTHER EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES.  
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